

MSCP NOW ON-LINE @ WWW.SDCDPLU.ORG



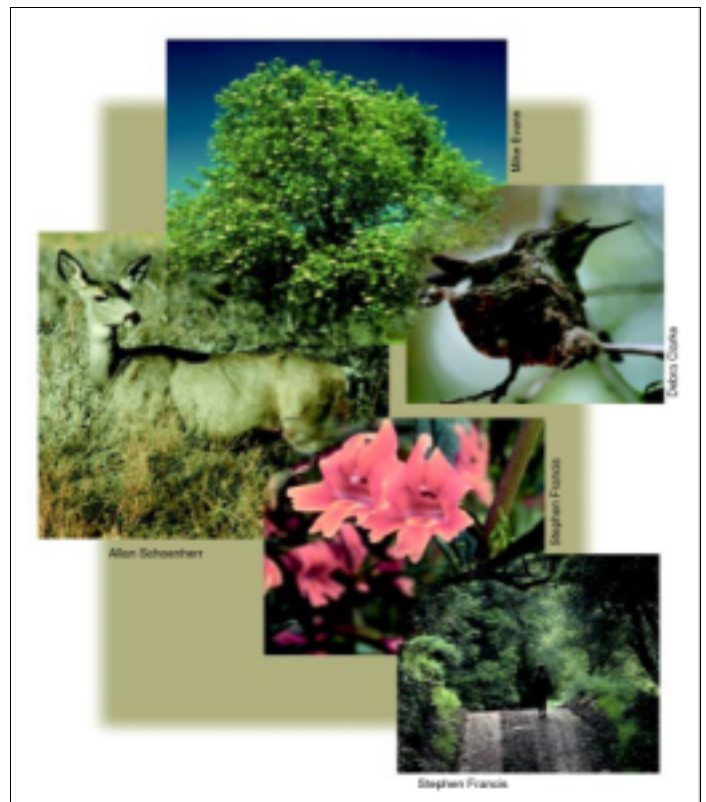
The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) now has a new website. This website can be accessed through the County Department of Planning and Land Use site at www.sdcdplu.org. Simply click on the MSCP icon and you will have access to information about the program. Copies of the MSCP Plan Implementing Ordinance are available. In addition, there is information about covered species, guidance to land owners, glossary of terms, and Frequently Asked Questions. Copies of past issues of MSCP News will also be available for viewing or downloading.

LIVING CLOSE TO NATURE

The County of San Diego's MSCP in cooperation with the Irvine Company, The Nature Conservancy, and the Nature Reserve of Orange County have created a pamphlet called *Living Close to Nature*. This publication is intended to inform residents living near wilderness areas how to live in harmony with wildlife. Included in this publication:

- Information on various animal and plant species
- Tips on pets and wildlife
- Gardening tips
- Recommended native plants for gardens
- Trail Etiquette and Safety
- San Diego County Parks & Open Space Preserve locations.

We have included *Living Close to Nature* with this issue of the newsletter and hope you find it to be informative and enjoyable to read.



WELCOME TRISH BOAZ!



The MSCP wishes to welcome our new staff member, Trish Boaz. Trish is from Mountain View, California and has lived in San Diego since 1982. She has a B.S. in Business Administration from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. She worked for eleven years as a land use and environmental law paralegal for a local land use attorney. Trish was the Planning, Land Use and Environmental Legislative Aide to San Diego County Supervisor Pam Slater from 1995 to May of 2000. In her new capacity, Trish will be responsible for organizing and coordinating private consultant contracting and tracking grant funds and expenditures, as well as coordinating a variety of complex multi-faceted project activities related to land use and environmental issues.

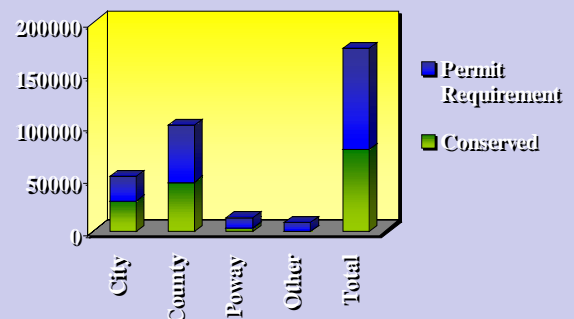
1999 ANNUAL REPORT SHOWCASED

The Second Annual Habitat Tracking Report for the MSCP was presented as part of the MSCP Public workshop 2000 held at the Visitors Information Center at Mission Trails Regional Park on November 14, 2000 in partnership with the City of San Diego, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). The County of San Diego is well on its way to assembling its piece of the approximately 172,000-acre preserve.

Since the Board of Supervisor's approval of the program on October 22, 1997, the County has bought and saved 46,764 acres and committed more than 26,000 acres for preservation. The overall preservation goal of the County's Subarea Plan is expected to cover approximately 101,268 acres of land. The County's contribution to the MSCP effort has grown from \$2.0 million in Fiscal Year 1998-1999 to \$5.0 million in FY 2000-2001. The planned expenditure in FY 2001-2002 is \$6.0

million. Future acquisitions will be made possible with additional funding generated by Propositions 12 and 13, approved by California voters last March. The County also is in the process of developing preserve plans to save more than 20,000 acres of habitat in North County and for the eastern two-thirds of the county up to the Imperial County line. You can access a copy of the entire 1999 Annual Report on the new MSCP website at: www.sdcdplu.org

Preserve Assembly



44% of the MHPA has been conserved to date

SAN DIEGO GRASSLANDS: A DISAPPEARING ECOSYSTEM



Precious grasslands are gradually vanishing from San Diego County's rural landscape. You may have appreciated the beauty of these grasslands on past trips through the countryside on your way to Borrego Springs or the Cuyamaca Mountains. Grasslands that occur in San Diego County can be divided into two types: **Native grasslands** are composed of mostly native, perennial grasses, and herbs. **Non-native grasslands** have a large component of annual grasses, which originated in the Mediterranean region. Since colonization of the San Diego area, land disturbance by heavy cattle grazing and agricultural activities have created large areas of non-native grasslands in areas that were originally native grasslands and shrublands (including Coastal sage scrub or Chaparral.) Native grasslands are now quite rare and occur in the hills south of Poway, Wright's Field in Alpine, parts of Camp Pendleton and Rancho Guejito, east of Valley Center. The non-native grasslands dominated by Mediterranean species occur in these same areas and additionally in the Black Mountain area west of Rancho Bernardo, Otay Ranch and near Warner Springs. San Diego County contains 174,200 acres of grassland. The vast majority of it is Annual, also known as Non-native

grassland. As development occurs, grasslands of both types are becoming limited.

Grasslands are important components of the San Diego County ecosystem. Both native and non-native grasslands function to provide a home for many of MSCP's covered species, and foraging areas for hawks, owls, and other predators. The burrowing owl and endangered Stephen's kangaroo rat for example, are dependent on the grassland habitat for its survival. Other species such as the Golden eagle, grasshopper sparrow, horned lark, and meadowlark all depend on native and non-native grasslands to survive. Native grasslands include bunch grasses, blue-eyed grass, checker mallow, and a number of bulb species including Wild hyacinth, and Golden stars. Non-native grassland, also known as annual grassland, is dominated by wild oats, mustard, and brome grasses. Many people do not realize the importance of grasslands simply by looking at it. When in fact, this vanishing ecosystem serves many functions by providing a habitat for a variety of plant and animal species. So the next time you are on your way to enjoy the natural areas our County has to offer, think about the MSCP and how it is working to preserve our threatened grasslands.

COASTAL ROSY BOA (*Charina (Lichanura) trivirgata roseofusca*)

Photo: Chris Brown, USGS

The Coastal Rosy Boa is approximately 22.4 –35.4 inches long. It is a heavy-bodied species with smooth, shiny scales, small eyes with vertically oval pupils, enlarged chin shields, lacks plate-like scales on top of its head, bluish-grey ground color with three broad

brown, orange, or reddish brown longitudinal stripes, same color mottling on interspaces, and cream venter, spotted with grey. Some individuals lack contrast between stripe and ground color, appearing unicolored, either reddish or silvery grey, subcaudal scales undivided. The juveniles are lighter ground color, contrasting dorsal pattern more distinct. The Coastal Rosy Boa is a gentle species that is easily handled and often rolls its body into a ball concealing its head when handled or injured. This species appears to be declining on the coast, where it was once common. Difficult to detect, this species is often observed along roads in the late evening or early morning. The Genus name for this species has recently been changed to *Charina*, although most people still use the name *Lichanura*.

Text source: Robert N. Fisher and Ted Chase. Obtained from <http://ratbert.wr.usgs.gov/fieldguide/chtr.htm>.

DWARF PLANTAIN (*Plantago erecta*)

Dwarf Plantain (*Plantago erecta*) is a thin, green or brownish herb approximately 7-20 cm high and native to California. It is also the primary host plant for the Quino checkerspot butterfly. Many people do not realize that certain animal species rely on plants for their survival, such as this critically endangered butterfly. Dwarf plantain occurs in annual forbland, coastal sage scrub, open chaparral, and foothill woodlands. The Quino checkerspot butterfly depends on the Dwarf plantain to deposit its eggs and for the larvae to consume the plant once it hatches. The butterfly tends to deposit its eggs in areas of low vegetation, which the Dwarf plantain provides. Dwarf plantain occurs in southern San Diego County.

Photo: Brother Alfred Brousseau, St. Mary's College



MSCP PERMIT GUIDE

CASE REVIEW

Members of the public express concern that if their proposed development is located within the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea boundaries there will be inherent time delays and associated increased costs, and even the possibility of denial of applications. Fears are also voiced over significant design alterations being placed on a project solely because it is located within the MSCP Subarea.

The MSCP does allow development within its boundaries, and streamlines the application process often shortening the length of time it takes County Staff to review and process any submitted plans. Streamlining of the process is enabled due to the County having the ability to confirm Third Party Beneficiary Status to all projects found in conformance with MSCP. This means that if a project site has species that have been listed as endangered under Federal or State law, the resultant lengthy and expensive Endangered Species permitting required by the Federal and State Wildlife authorities can be avoided as the County has already been granted the authorization to "take" any protected species covered by the MSCP. Also, review for conformance with

MSCP is simultaneous to CEQA review processes, therefore no additional time on environmental review is caused by the implementation of the MSCP Plan. To mitigate any significant or cumulative impacts the MSCP Plan encourages land acquisition and dedication in areas that have been designated by the MSCP as potential preserve areas. Mitigation ratios can be more favorable towards an application that mitigates within these areas. Environmental design standards are similar to areas outside of the MSCP but are more explicit and tailored to minimize impacts to potential preserve areas.

The MSCP Mitigation requirements and design standards are for the area covered by the MSCP are set forth in the Biological Mitigation Ordinance that is now available on line on the MSCP Website.



Contributors: Robert Asher, Tracy Cline,
Tom Oberbauer, Maeve Hanley,
Dawn Dickman, Trish Boaz
Editor: Susan Yogi

Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

Chief Administrative Officer

Walter F. Ekard

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Land Use and Environmental Group

Robert R. Copper

Director, Department of Planning and Land Use

Gary L. Pryor

MSCP Division Chief

Robert E. Asher

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about the MSCP Program or to become part of the mailing list, please contact Robert Asher.
(858) 694-3722

County of San Diego Department of
Planning and Land Use
5201 Ruffin Rd, Suite B
San Diego, CA 92123



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